



U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

Washington, DC 20515

James L. Oberstar
Chairman

John L. Mica
Ranking Republican Member

February 3, 2010

David Heymsfeld, Chief of Staff
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The Honorable Calvin L. Scovel, III
Inspector General
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
West Building – W70-300
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Inspector General Scovel,

Improving the safety of the flying public is—and will remain—the number one priority of the Subcommittee on Aviation. Following the tragic Colgan Air crash last February, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) initiated its Airline Safety and Pilot Training “Call to Action.” The “Call to Action” included rulemaking initiatives on pilot training as well as focused inspections of the nation’s airlines. The key now is sustained follow-through, oversight, and actual implementation of changes that can enhance the margin of safety.

As the Subcommittee continues its oversight, a better understanding of the relationship between mainline airlines and their regional code share partners is needed to ensure one level of safety. This is particularly important given that the majority of air travelers are unaware when they purchase a ticket from a mainline airline that they may actually fly on a regional airline. In fact, the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) expressed the need to look more closely at safety issues surrounding code share arrangements during its February 2, 2010, meeting on the Colgan final accident report.

We have previously asked your office to review a number of pilot safety issues, such as training and flight duty and rest requirements. We are now also requesting that you conduct a review of domestic code share relationships. At a minimum, this review should consider:

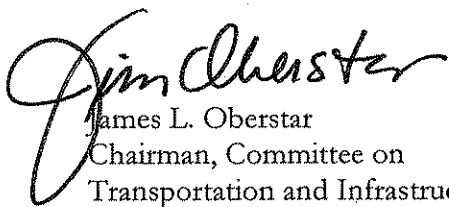
- The Department of Transportation (DOT) and FAA 's legal authority to review agreements between mainline air carriers and their regional partners;
- How mainline air carriers ensure that their regional partners have the same level of safety; and

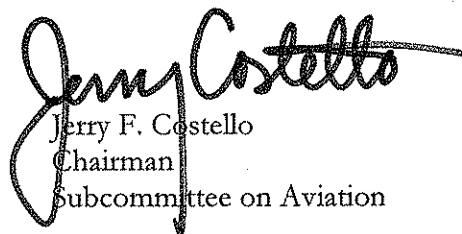
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- Whether the flying public has adequate information to make informed decisions when purchasing an airline ticket.

I appreciate your assistance on this important matter. Should you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Giles Giovinazzi, Democratic Staff Director on the Subcommittee on Aviation at (202) 225-9161.

Sincerely,


James L. Oberstar
Chairman, Committee on
Transportation and Infrastructure


Jerry F. Costello
Chairman
Subcommittee on Aviation